

**“Standing Firm in the Grace of God Series”**  
**Lesson #6 “The Will of God gives life in the spirit”**  
**1 Peter Chapter 4:1-6**

**Scripture:** 1 Peter 5:6-7 “Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, 7 casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.”

**Introduction:**

I’ve heard countless people throughout the years say if I had only jumped in there with my friend and started that company look where I would be now. If I had only bought IBM stock when it was real cheap....I’d be a millionaire. If only!

It’s true a lot of people search for happiness and success in earthly things. At lunch each day I check out the stock market report and watch the news and I see the world going crazy searching for satisfaction and looking for meaning and purpose. I walk out my front door and see my neighbor drive up in one of his 2 Hum-vees and I realize its not just on TV.

The founder of Apple Computer Steve Jobs, was trying to recruit the President of Pepsi-Cola John Sculley to work for Apple. And he asked him this question: “Do you want to spend the rest of your life selling sugar water or do you want to change the world?”

Well, as Christians, God has not called us to live out our lives in any mediocre way filling our own desires and serving ourselves. But, God has called us as Christians to change the world.

Matthew 5:14 “*You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden;*”

And to that end Jesus says in Matthew 28:18-20

*“... All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 " Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*

**Transitional Statement:**

Today I would like to ask you to think about your purpose and how it effects your life and your relationship with God.

**Lesson:**

**I. Christians should focus on the will of God**

*1 Peter 4:1-2*

*“Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh,*

A. Born of questionable beginnings by the worlds standards.

1. Joseph and Mary weren’t married when Jesus was born
2. Talk of the town

- B. Herod tried to kill Him as a baby Matt 2:16
  - 1. Lots of babies were killed because of Christ
  - 2. Did people remember this and hold it against him
    - \*Maybe some bitterness and hatred in some families for Jesus
- C. Parents understanding at the temple “Why have you treated us this way” Luke 2:48
- D. His own brothers didn’t believe in Him John 7:5
- E. God’s very own nation rejected Him John 1:11
- F. Jesus’ home town tried to throw Him off a cliff Luke 4:29
- G. In the last days of His ministry He was homeless Matt 8:20
- H. His close friends betrayed, denied and abandoned Him
- I. The Sanhedrin incited the Roman government against Him and the whole city of Jerusalem as well .
- J. They were forever plotting how to trap Jesus or set Him up for failure.
- K. They even actively plotted how they might kill Jesus
- L. He was falsely accused of blaspheming God
- M. Beaten.....Flogged
- N. Publicly humiliated Him
- O. Spit upon and reviled
- P. Mocked Him and Ridiculed His worth
- Q. They took His clothes and subjected Him to shame
- R. And they gave Him a place among thieves
  - 1. And there on that cross Jesus willingly poured out Himself unto death Isa 53:12

-He gave all he had....Listen to Isaiah’s words in Isaiah 53

*Who has believed our message?  
 And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?  
 2 For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot,  
 And like a root out of parched ground;  
 He has no stately form or majesty  
 That we should look upon Him,*

*Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him.  
 3 He was despised and forsaken of men,  
 A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;  
 And like one from whom men hide their face  
 He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.  
 4 Surely our griefs He Himself bore,  
 And our sorrows He carried;  
 Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken,  
 Smitten of God, and afflicted.  
 5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions,  
 He was crushed for our iniquities;  
 The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him,  
 And by His scourging we are healed.  
 6 All of us like sheep have gone astray,  
 Each of us has turned to his own way;  
 But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all  
 To fall on Him.  
 7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted,  
 Yet He did not open His mouth;  
 Like a lamb that is led to slaughter,  
 And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers,  
 So He did not open His mouth.  
 8 By oppression and judgment He was taken away;  
 And as for His generation, who considered  
 That He was cut off out of the land of the living  
 For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due?  
 9 His grave was assigned with wicked men,  
 Yet He was with a rich man in His death,  
 Because He had done no violence,  
 Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.  
 10 But the Lord was pleased  
 To crush Him, putting Him to grief;  
 If He would render Himself as a guilt offering,  
 He will see His offspring,  
 He will prolong His days,  
 And the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand.  
 11 As a result of the anguish of His soul,  
 He will see it and be satisfied;  
 By His knowledge the Righteous One,  
 My Servant, will justify the many,  
 As He will bear their iniquities.  
 12 Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great,  
 And He will divide the booty with the strong;  
 Because He poured out Himself to death,  
 And was numbered with the transgressors;  
 Yet He Himself bore the sin of many,  
 And interceded for the transgressors.”*

- S. Do you get the idea that Jesus suffered greatly.....He suffered physically, He endured and frankly put up with a lot of grief.

**\*All to bring us to God 1 Peter 3:18**

*And it is unto this that Peter says “arm yourselves also with the same purpose, “*

A. Arm means to take up weapons against.

1. If the enemy is coming over the hill you better pick up a weapon and stand at post right?
2. The idea here is that the enemy is at hand and its time to pick up a weapon and fight.... “the good fight”

-Not just any old weapon like:

- Swords
- Spears
- Rocks
- Bazookas
- Rocket launchers
- AK 47 Assault riffles

**\*But arm yourselves with the same purpose as Christ**

**-That is take on His same mindset and cause  
.....The salvation of mankind**

*because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,*

A. When we follow Christ’ example in suffering we make a conscience choice to cease from sin.

-This doesn’t mean if we suffer we are automatically exempt from sin. The Apostle John says “If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.” 1 John 1:10

B. The word “Cease” here is a middle voice verb in the Greek and indicated action done by a person to themselves.

-Thus Peter here is saying that if you have taken on the mindset of Christ and armed yourself with His same purpose and endured suffering because of it. You have made a voluntarily choice to remove yourself from sinfulness.

\*In other words, you can’t be walking in the direction of Christ and walking in Sin.

*2 so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.*

A. Live out our lives not chasing our own desires

-Not asking what pleases us.....and what makes us feel good.

B. But, becoming like Jesus who in the garden prayed “not my will but thine be done.”

C. Christians we must become people entirely focused on the will of God.

\*Living in these fleshly bodies but focused on the spiritual.

## II. Christians should turn away from their own will

*1 Peter 4:3-5*

*3 For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries.*

A. You have had plenty of time to chase your own desires

1. To walk in your own direction
2. To leading your own way
3. To make your own choice

B. To the Christian who is trying to ride the fence spiritually speaking, i.e. trying to dabble in Christianity and still have worldly fun chasing one last hooray before getting serious about godliness

**\*God says enough is enough**

C. God says: You need to:

1. Turn away from
2. Separate yourself
3. Have nothing to do with ungodliness

\*Stop running with the pack

D. The Apostle Paul puts it this way

*Galatians 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me."*

## III. The pursuit of Christianity catches the world off balance.

*4 In all this, they are surprised that you do not run with them into the same excesses of dissipation, and they malign you;*

A. When a person becomes a Christian and stops chasing his or her own desires

1. This surprises their friends.
2. They will probably wonder why you don't join in like you use to.

B. And when you tell them why.....

1. The fact that they are living wrong comes to light in full force.

2. And wanting to have the focus off themselves.

-They strike out at you

-Specifically speaking evil of you

C. What if your friends are not surprised? We might be engaging in worldly things during the week and trying to be godly on Sundays. What kind of influence for the Lord would this be?

-I can tell you this, if I were your friend and you were playing church on Sunday and engaging in ungodliness during the week with me, you could forget talking to me about God because I wouldn't want anything to do with that type of hypocrisy .

#### **IV. All people will be accountable for whose will they serve.**

*5 but they will give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.*

A. If those who heap abuse on you because of your godliness should never repent.

B. They will have to answer to God Romans 14:12

C. And they will be punished 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9

*“For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, 7 and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, 8 dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,”*

D. Vengeance is mine saith the Lord Romans 12:19

**Note: Here at the end of this text the living and the dead are brought up.**

#### **V. The result of Christian suffering is life**

*1 Peter 4:6*

*6 For the gospel has for this purpose been preached even to those who are dead, that though they are judged in the flesh as men, they may live in the spirit according to the will of God.*

A. Having the gospel isn't a magical force field that somehow keeps you from suffering. Many godly men and woman through out the ages, were judged at the hand of men and put to death, but the result was not loss, defeat, shameful and it wasn't even death in the real sense of the word. Real death is merely separation from God. You see if you suffer in the flesh even to the point of death for the will of God, life in the spirit is your reward.

B. James 1:2-4

*“Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. 4 And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”*

C. Revelation 2:10

*“... Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.”*

**Conclusion:**

**So, today the question would be:**

**Have you taken on the very purpose of Christ?**

**Is the will of God at the forefront of your life?**